



Security Council

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Letter dated 20 March 2000 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

Pursuant to Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) of 10 June 1999, I have the honour to convey the attached report on the international security presence in Kosovo covering the period from 24 January to 22 February 2000.

I should be grateful if you would bring it to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kofi A. Annan



Annex

Monthly report to the United Nations on the operations of the Kosovo Force

1. During the reporting period (24 January-22 February) approximately 45,000 Kosovo Force (KFOR) troops were deployed in theatre, with no major deployment changes since the last report. Russian troops remain unable to deploy into the area around Orahovac, and efforts continue to be made to find a complete resolution to this deployment problem.

Security

2. During the period, there was an upswing in the level of ethnic violence in the province, particularly in Kosovska Mitrovica, in Multinational Brigade (MNB) (North), where two separate outbreaks of violence resulted in the death of 5 civilians, the wounding of 2 KFOR soldiers and the arrest of 35 Kosovar Albanians and 3 Serbs.

3. The first outbreak of violence took place during the night of 3/4 February, and is generally believed to have been in reaction to a rocket attack against a bus transporting Kosovar Serbs from Mitrovica to Banja on 3 February. That attack left two Serbs dead and three wounded, one seriously. During the evening of 3 February, there were numerous shooting incidents in Mitrovica and demonstrations near the city centre. KFOR troops were fired at, and representatives from many of the international organizations had to be evacuated. The violence eventually died down in the early hours of 4 February. The KFOR Commander imposed a curfew on the city, and KFOR troops increased their patrols in and around Mitrovica. The situation in the city remained tense but calm until the second such incident, which took place on 13 February and which began with an explosion and gunshots in the northern part of the city. Seven Albanians were injured, three seriously. Later that morning, KFOR troops were injured by sniper fire. Two snipers were captured; both were wounded, and one subsequently died of his injuries. Both were Kosovar Albanians. In response to this second wave of violence, KFOR troops maintained a heavy presence on the streets, conducting foot patrols, vehicle checkpoints and static guard at homes and businesses in minority neighbourhoods. On 20 February, in order to improve security in Mitrovica, the KFOR Commander launched Operation Ibar, in which part of the city was cordoned off and buildings were

searched. KFOR will continue to take firm action against any individual or group seeking to incite violence or unrest.

4. On 21 February, between 20,000 and 30,000 people marched from Pristina to Vucitrn and subsequently took part in demonstrations in Mitrovica. The march was conducted peacefully and, in Mitrovica, the demonstrators dispersed following an address by the KFOR Commander and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

5. Apart from the Mitrovica incidents, over the reporting period there were arson attacks on Serb and Roma houses in the Lipljan and Orahovac areas. In Gnjilane, in MNB (East), there were three grenade attacks against Serb houses.

6. During the reporting period there were a number of attacks against KFOR troops in MNB (East) and, as reported above, in MNB (North), in Mitrovica.

7. KFOR continues to work closely with the United Nations Mine Action Coordination Centre and other demining organizations in Kosovo. By 23 February, 8,058 anti-personnel mines, 5,692 anti-tank mines and 8,844 bomblets had been cleared. KFOR troops continue to focus on the eradication of the threat from cluster-bomb units, with ordnance disposal teams destroying bomblets marked during the winter.

8. KFOR troops continue to uncover and to confiscate caches of weapons throughout the area of operations on a regular basis. During the searches in Mitrovica, 17 AK-47s, 1 M-59 rifle and ammunition, 3 Dragonov guns, 4 rocket launchers, 13 hand grenades, 173 inert mines and other assorted munitions were discovered. During search operations in Kravarica and Kosovska Kamenica, ammunition and military equipment were confiscated.

9. KFOR troops provide appropriate control of Kosovo's internal boundaries and external borders. No violations of Security Council resolution 1160 (1998) of 31 March 1998 have been reported, although it is deemed likely that there might be some limited weapon smuggling across the border on foot.

Cooperation and compliance by the parties

10. The Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC) remained largely compliant during the reporting period, although there was a limited number of proven instances of non-compliance, with some former Kosovo Liberation Army members of KPC involved in undesirable or illegal activities, including ethnic intimidation and protection racketeering. In order to combat non-compliance, the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and KFOR have developed a draft disciplinary code for KPC, which came into force on 1 March.

11. The key leader and mid-level leader selection phase of KPC has now been completed, and during March and April the KPC leadership will decide on which members remain active and which will become reservists. KFOR will monitor this selection process in order to ensure that the agreed time-lines are met by KPC. Ten per cent of KPC posts will be held open for minority membership, with the intent that minority positions will be distributed evenly across the entire KPC.

12. In general, the Serb army (VJ) and Serb security forces continue to comply with the terms of the military-technical agreement and to be cooperative in their dealings with KFOR. VJ units continued to operate in southern Serbia near the ground safety zone during the reporting period, but this is again assessed as normal seasonal training.

Cooperation with international organizations

13. KFOR continues to provide humanitarian assistance throughout the province on a daily basis, with special focus on the transportation of fuel and firewood. In addition, KFOR troops continue to support food distribution efforts by international organizations and to escort refugees and internally displaced persons.

14. As at 22 February the UNMIK police force numbered 2,052, including 205 border police. The continuing shortfall in the number of police is being filled partially and temporarily by KFOR troops and by the theatre-level multinational specialized units, primarily to provide public security, within means and capabilities, to provide anti-riot capability and to mount search operations. There is an UNMIK requirement for 10 special (riot) police companies, the

first of which is not expected to be deployed before early March.

15. KFOR provides daily support to the Kosovo Police School, whose second intake of recruits graduated on 19 February. The third intake of recruits, who began their course on 22 February, numbered 250, of whom 217 were Albanians, 22 Serbs and 11 members of other minorities.

16. Control and monitoring of borders remains a high priority for KFOR, with KFOR troops controlling, patrolling and monitoring border and provincial boundary crossing points. Patrols are stationed on a 24-hour basis at all 12 open border and boundary crossing points; 30 other known border crossing points are closed, and those, as well as the rest of the border area, are monitored by KFOR foot, vehicle and helicopter patrols. With the exception of the Blace border crossing point, all vehicles are thoroughly searched; this is not possible at Blace because of the density of the traffic. However, random searches of vehicles are conducted at Blace, and all vehicles and occupants are subject to a document check. With respect to the border with Albania, KFOR provides permanent manned checkpoints at the two crossing points that are open for traffic. Most of the remaining unmanned crossing points are physically blocked by barriers topped with barbed wire. Through a policy of aggressive patrolling and close liaison with the Albanian border guards, KFOR has been able to severely curtail illegal cross-border activity. KFOR closely coordinates operations at weekly meetings with the Albanian border authorities, the United Nations Border Police and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), hosted by OSCE at the Morina South border crossing point. KFOR also conducts joint patrols and search operations with UNMIK police.

17. KFOR continues to support UNMIK at all levels of the civil administration. All executive, legislative and judicial structures in Kosovo have now been integrated into the Kosovo-UNMIK Joint Interim Administrative Structure, and the 19 administrative departments of the Structure have been allocated. The expanded Kosovo Transitional Council held its second session on 16 February, with 28 members in attendance. A Catholic representative was present at that meeting for the first time, but no Serb attended. The meeting focused on the situation in Kosovska Mitrovica and specifically on the UNMIK strategy

paper outlining practical steps to restore the security situation in the city.

Return of refugees and displaced persons

18. Between July 1999 and 15 February 2000, the refugee repatriation programme organized by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) assisted in 132,000 voluntary returns, primarily from third countries. Between January and mid-February, 6,673 Kosovar Albanians returned to Kosovo, and KFOR has been working with IOM and UNHCR to ensure that the returns take place safely. As far as the status of internally displaced persons is concerned, in particular Kosovar Serbs, although some initial efforts towards cooperation between Albanians and Serbs have been registered in a number of areas, this is not a general trend. KFOR, UNMIK, UNHCR and OSCE are working closely together to improve conditions for Serb minorities in the Oraovac, Velika Hoc and Djakovica area of responsibility. With respect to Mitrovica, some 1,600 people, mainly Kosovar Albanians, left the northern part of the city in mid-February following the unrest there.

Outlook

19. Ethnically motivated violence continues to be a major concern, with Mitrovica likely to remain a flashpoint for the near future. KFOR, in close coordination with UNMIK, will continue to implement measures to prevent any further widespread violence there and to reinforce stability and security in the province.